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AGDA (M) (5 Jun 70)

FOR OT UT 701132

11 June 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 7th
Squadron, 17th Cavalry, Period Ending 31 January 1970 (U)

AD509551


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ROBERT E. LYNCH
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7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 7TH SQUADRON 17TH CAVALRY
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96262

AVLACB-GC

10 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry,
Period Ending 31 January, RCS CS FOR-65 (R2) (U)

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1. (C) Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities:

a. (C) General.

(1) This report covers the period from 1 November 1969 through 31 January 1970, and is submitted in accordance with AR 525-15, USARV Regulation 525-15, and 17th Aviation Group (Combat) Regulation 525-15.

(2) Mission. To perform reconnaissance, surveillance and security for Free World Forces in the II Corps Tactical Zone. To engage in combat as an economy of force unit and provide limited anti-tank defense. One or more of the units may be placed in support of a major ground unit.

(3) Organization Structure. The Headquarters, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry is located at CAMP ENARI (AR812355), DRAGON MOUNTAIN, Republic of Vietnam, and is commanded by Lieutenant Colonel George S. Murry. The Squadron has its full complement of cavalry troops as per MTOE 17-95T. The Squadron is currently assigned Operational Control (minus Troop C) to the 4th Infantry Division, CAMP ENARI, DRAGON MOUNTAIN, Republic of Vietnam. Troop C is assigned Operational Control, to the 173d Airborne Brigade. (See Inclosure 1 for a list of subordinate units reflecting the organizational structure).

(4) Tactical Postures: During the reporting period there were several changes in the tactical posture of the Squadron. Troop D which had been with Troop E in support of TASK FORCE FIGHTER, in the BAN ME THOUT/BU PRANG area, returned to CAMP ENARI on 13 November. Troop E returned from the BAN ME THOUT area on 30 December. Troop A which had been at AN KHE in support of the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division returned to Squadron at CAMP ENARI on 8 December. K COMPANY (RANGER) of the 75th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division, became OPCON to the Squadron on 16 December. Troop C remained at LANE ARMY AIRFIELD vicinity of AN SON in support of the 173d Airborne Brigade.

b. (C) Personnel.

(1) During the reporting period the following major changes in command and staff positions occurred:

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(a) MAJ James S. Hahn 316-36-6528 assumed command of Troop C on 2 Jan 1970, replacing MAJ Joseph A. Tobin.

(b) MAJ Leighton O. Haselgrove 267-00-9958 assumed duties as Squadron S-3 on 3 Nov 1969, replacing CPT Robert D. McCleary 358-22-3157.

(c) CPT Clyde A. Hennis 526-50-4866 assumed command of Headquarters Troop on 14 Nov 1969, replacing CPT Samuel E. Begley 403-60-8985.

(d) CPT David E. Huckriede 513-48-1008 assumed duties as S-1 on 12 Dec 1969, replacing CPT Vincent J. Falconio 076-30-5749.

(e) CPT Paul T. Pennington 244-52-1598 assumed duties as S-2 on 14 Dec 1969, replacing CPT Henry G. Wall 266-74-1458.

(f) CPT James F. Roberts 320-34-7787 assumed duties as Squadron Safety Officer on 15 Dec 1969, replacing CPT Randell Ramsey.

(g) WO1 Roy H. Majors 262-86-0193 assumed duties as S-5 on 24 Dec 1969, replacing CW2 Alan M. Enochs, 448-48-5762.

(2) The following are personnel occupying major command and staff positions:

(a) Squadron Commander	LTC George S. Murry
(b) Squadron Executive Officer	MAJ Robert L. Rackley
(c) S-1	CPT David E. Huckriede
(d) S-2	CPT Paul T. Pennington
(e) S-3	MAJ Leighton O. Haselgrove
(f) S-4	CPT Jimmie A. Yarger
(g) S-5	WO1 Roy H. Majors
(h) Chaplain	MAJ Tracey A. Maness
(i) Safety Officer	CPT James F. Roberts
(j) Maintenance Officer	CPT Steven L. White
(k) Signal Officer	CPT Guy W. Fussell
(l) Flight Surgeon	CPT Joseph P. Chollack Jr
(m) CO, HHT	CPT Clyde A. Hennis
(n) CO, A Troop	MAJ Ronald G. Maxon
(o) CO, B Troop	MAJ Billy J. Bowling

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(p) CO, C Troop

MAJ James S. Hahn

(q) CO, D Troop

CPT Kenneth G. Lininger

(r) Squadron SGM

CSM Robert M. Couch

(3) Unit strength and miscellaneous related data is attached to inclosure 1.

c. (C) Intelligence.

(1) During the reporting period the S-2 Section activities included:

SECRET Clearances Validated - 56
SECRET Clearances Granted - 13
SECRET Clearances Initiated - 15
CONFIDENTIAL Clearances Granted - 2
TOP SECRET Clearances Validated - 7
TOP SECRET Clearances Initiated - 4
Security Debriefings - 85
Escape and Evasion Debriefings - 3

(2) Intelligence Summary for the Squadron's tactical area of interest is as follows:

(a) KONTUM Province: Enemy activity in KONTUM Province was primarily characterized by frequent attacks by fire on US and ARVN bases in the KONTUM City and DAK TO-BEN HET areas. Enemy elements employed 60mm and 82mm mortars, B-40 and 122mm rockets during stand off attacks on BEN HET CIDG Camp during the first two weeks of November. These standoff attacks were a continuation of an increase in enemy activity which began in mid-October. On 13 November an element of the 4th Mobile Strike Force operating to the north of BEN HET CIDG Camp received 30 rounds of mortar fire. On 14 November the same friendly unit's perimeter was probed by a reinforced NVA Company. This contact resulted in 24 NVA KIA. Elements of the 28th NVA Regiment that were not employed in the DUC LAP area were possibly the enemy force involved in contacts in the BEN HET area. A POW captured during an attempted Sapper raid on DAK TO District Headquarters in early November confirmed the presence of the K-20 Sapper Battalion in the area. DAK TO District Headquarters and the 4-42 ARVN Regt CP in the same area received several standoff attacks throughout November. The 304th Local Force VC Battalion continued harrassing attacks on hamlets and along highway 14 in the DAK TO-TAN CANH area. DAK TO airstrip received a standoff attack consisting of 107mm mortar and 75mm recoilless rifle on 24 November. Elements of the 40th Artillery Regt were believed to have been responsible for this attack. Sporadic mining incidents continued along QL 14 and route 512 throughout November. There was a slight decrease in enemy activity noted in KONTUM Province in early December. An element of the 14th ARVN Cavalry engaged a two company size enemy element on 6 December while conducting security missions along route 512. The DAK PEK area was the scene of increased enemy activity during December. The 80th NVA Battalion was identified northwest of DAK PEK CIDG Camp. Documents captured by ARVN forces in the TOU MORONG Valley indicated presence of the KONTUM Provincial unit in the area. KONTUM City received 19 rounds of 122mm rocket fire on 22 December. A few hamlets near KONTUM City received harrassing attacks during this same period. During late December and early January enemy activity decreased signifi-

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cantly. Standoff attacks were resumed against allied installations and firebases as the second week of January approached. Enemy activity increased significantly in the vicinity of KONTUM City and DAK PEK. On 7 January the 24th STZ Headquarters received an 82mm mortar attack, and on the following day KONTUM Airfield received several 122mm rockets. A US firebase north of KONTUM City received a light attack by fire from an enemy element that employed 60mm mortars. DAK PEK CIDG Camp received several attacks by fire during January. On 10 January an element from DAK PEK CIDG Camp made contact with an NVA Company. Friendly Forces accounted for 25 NVA Elements of the 304th Local Force Battalion and the K-20 Sapper Battalion continued their harrassing attacks in the vicinity of DAK TO District Headquarters at a moderate pace during January.

(b) FLEIKU Province: Interdiction of lines of communications and disruption of the GVN Pacification Program were the major aims of enemy elements in FLEIKU Province. Harrassing attacks by fire, limited ground probes and mining were the primary methods employed by enemy elements to accomplish their mission. Supply convoys, friendly installations, RF/PF Hamlets and friendly units conducting patrols were the prime targets for enemy activity. Enemy Activity in FLEIKU Province was highlighted by a six-hour Sapper attack on LZ St. GEORGE (AR855144) on 6 November. This attack resulted in 41 enemy killed in action. Several weapons and satchel charges were captured. The defending element sustained moderate casualties. The interrogation of enemy POWs and returnee personnel revealed that the 408th Sapper Battalion and the H-15 Local Force Battalion participated in the attack. Throughout November the 24th NVA Regiment initiated contacts on villages, military installations and friendly ground forces in the FLEI MRONG Area. The 6th Battalion, 24th NVA Regiment concentrated their attention on interdicting highway 14 between FLEIKU and KONTUM. Elements of this battalion sustained heavy casualties on 8 November when they engaged an ARVN Cavalry Unit to the east of FLEI MRONG near Highway 14. The 95B Regiment remained active throughout the period in the MANG YANG and DAK AYUN river area. This unit's main effort was directed toward interdicting Highway 19. Local VC forces targeted their activities on villages and hamlets participating in the GVN pacification and resettlement program. Their primary missions were to procure supplies and propagandize to turn the villages against the GVN Administration. Where these goals failed, they employed harrassing attacks, forced servitude, kidnappings and assassinations to impress their will on villagers. The enemy's effort to strategically locate resupply caches was foiled on several occasions. Several large rice caches and weapons caches were found by friendly forces operating in the south central region of THANH AN District and the DAK AYUN river area. Several agent reports indicated that FLEIKU Province would experience a highpoint in enemy activity during December to possibly last until the TET holiday period. This highpoint has not yet been encountered. Captured documents and visual sightings of training areas indicate that enemy forces have begun to rely on sapper tactics to minimize their casualties. More recently, agent reports have indicated that a significant increase in enemy activity is planned for the TET holiday period. FLEIKU City and military installations in the area have been mentioned as prominent targets for enemy activity during this period.

(c) DARLAC Province: Disruption of the GVN pacification effort was the primary objective of enemy activity throughout the reporting period. Harrassing standoff attacks and ground probes were employed against hamlets in BAN ME THOUT and BUCN HO Districts that contained Regional Forces and Popular Forces Pacification Teams. VC propaganda lectures were given to villagers throughout the Province.

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The primary aim of the enemy's propaganda campaign was to discredit the GVN administration and the US Armed Forces. DAKLAC province experienced relatively light enemy activity due to the shift of emphasis to the DUC LAP/BU PRANG area during this period. Harassing attacks in the vicinity of BAN ME THOUT City were the most significant enemy activities in November. On 16 November BAN ME THOUT City Airfield and the 23rd ARVN Division Headquarters received simultaneous attacks by ground fire. Minor attacks against the outlying hamlets of BUON DANG and BUC N D'HAN occurred in early November. During December, US elements operating south of BAN ME THOUT City found 3 sizable caches of arms and munitions. A PW captured in the same area on 25 December was identified as a member of the K394 NVA Artillery Battalion. He stated that the C-3 Company, K394 NVA Battalion was east of BAN ME THOUT City. The unit's mission was to transport rice to KHANH HOA Province. Several sniping incidents were reported during December. Enemy activity increased in the Province during January. Major ARVN elements that returned to the area probably provided a more lucrative target for enemy elements to further their activities designed to discredit the GVN administration and its armed forces. Enemy elements conducted a sapper attack against an ARVN Regimental CP 10 kilometers north of BAN ME THOUT City on 6 January. This attack resulted in 9 friendly KIA, 20 friendly WIA and 6 enemy KIA. Elements of the 401st Local Force Sapper Battalion and the E301 Local Force Battalion probably participated in this attack. These units constantly operate in the vicinity of the MEWAL Plantation. The 303rd Local Force Battalion is another major enemy element operating in the vicinity of BAN ME THOUT. Enemy propagandizing and proselyting activities increased during late January as the TET period approached.

(d) QUANG DUC Province: QUANG DUC Province was the scene of intense enemy activity during November and early December. Intense shelling forced the abandoning of Firebase KATE (YU573538) on 1 November. Firebases SUSAN (YU518439) and ANNIE (YU483513) were closed the following day due to the intensification of enemy activity in the BU PRANG area. After all major firebases between DUC LAP CIDG Camp and BU PRANG CIDG Camp had been abandoned enemy forces concentrated their efforts on the two CIDG Camps and bases of supporting ARVN Units. Almost daily allied bases in the DUC LAP/BU PRANG area received significant standoff attacks from enemy elements employing an assortment of mortar, rocket and, in some cases, artillery fire. Elements of the 66th NVA Battalion supported by the K-33 Battalion, 40th NVA Artillery Regiment and C-21 Company, K-37 Sapper Battalion were primarily responsible for standoff attacks and ground attacks against BU PRANG CIDG Camp and ARVN forces operating in the vicinity. Much of the artillery fired on BU PRANG CIDG Camp and Firebase KATE came from positions inside the CAMBODIAN border. Enemy forces operating in the DUC LAP/BU PRANG area sustained heavy casualties with the support of Tactical Air Strikes and Artillery to eliminate the active threat of enemy forces in the area. Friendly casualties were relatively light during most of the contacts with the enemy forces in the area. DUC LAP CIDG Camp and neighboring bases received 107mm and 122mm rockets, assorted mortars, limited ground probes. The 28th NVA Regiment and the K-394 NVA Artillery Battalion supported by elements of the K-37 Sapper Battalion and the 40th NVA Artillery Regiment were primarily responsible for attacks in the DUC LAP area. Antiaircraft

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units supporting enemy elements in the DUC LAP/BU PRANG area employed a highly formidable network of antiaircraft positions to interdict aerial support of friendly forces operating in the area. Several aircraft supporting operations in the area received hits from 12.7mm and smaller caliber enemy weapons. One of the more significant ground to air fire incidents occurred on 2 November. Three aircraft from B Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry were shot down while conducting visual reconnaissance in the vicinity of Firebase HELEM (YU801635). Shelling attacks and ground attacks reached a peak in the later part of November. Due to the effectiveness of friendly operations in the area, enemy forces lost their capability to sustain themselves in repeated contacts. As December passed enemy activity gradually subsided to the point of negligible contacts. Main force units withdrew to base areas inside the Cambodian Border. Since that time most of the major units involved in enemy activities in QUANG DUC Province were reported moving north toward FLEIKU Province and the Tri-Border area. Although the emphasis of attacks were in the BU PRANG, DUC LAP area, there were also directed attacks against GIA NGHIA, and KIEN DUC District Headquarters during the period. Except for small ground probes and harassing attacks by fire, enemy activity was at a very low level during January.

(e) BINH DINH Province: Enemy Troop strength in BINH DINH Province increased notably during the period. This increase was caused by the movement of the 3rd NVA Division from QUANG NGAI Province into BINH DINH Province. The 3rd NVA Division's major subordinate units are the 2nd VC Regiment, 300th NVA Artillery Battalion, and the 200th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion. The 93rd, 95th and 97th Battalions are the maneuver elements of the 2nd VC Regiment. HOI CHANH, prisoners of war, and documents gave positive identification of the 3rd NVA Division and its subordinate elements throughout November. The 3rd NVA Division has most of its elements deployed in the vicinity of LZ ENGLISH (BS 875010). The 18th NVA Regiment previously identified in the AN KHE area continued its mission of interdicting Highway 19 and disrupting the Pacification Program in that area. The procurement of food supplies was the major activity of this unit during November for proposed highpoints of activity during November and December. A sapper attack on the Airfield at AN KHE on November was the most significant enemy initiated incident during the period. Enemy sappers penetrated the perimeter and destroyed 14 helicopters and inflicted heavy damage on 2 more. Friendly forces sustained light casualties during this attack. LZ ENGLISH located in the eastern portion of the province was the prime target for enemy attacks. On 24 January LZ ENGLISH (BR308 457) received a standoff mortar attack. Examination of shell fragments revealed that CS rounds had been employed. Enemy forces launched significant standoff attacks on this area during mid November and January. Enemy elements along Highway 19 between the MUNG YANG Pass and the AN KHE Pass continued a moderate pace of interdicting Highway 19 and sabotaging the POL Pipeline along Highway 19. During the first part of January, aircraft flying Airborne Personnel Detector missions and low level visual reconnaissance encountered claymore mines planted in the trees to the north west of AN KHE. The 4th Infantry Division launched operation WAYNE THRUST at the beginning of the year to locate and destroy elements of the GIA LAI Provincial Units which were believed to be in near the western boundary of BINH DINH Province area and the 18th NVA Regiment which had been operating in Base Area 226 and the VINH THUAN Valley area.

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Several indentifications of elements of the 18th Regiment, C-2 Sapper Company, and 2nd VC Regiment have been obtained since the start of this operation. Sizeable arms, ammunitions and food caches have been found in Base Area 226 and the VINH THUAN Valley Area.

d. (0) Operations: (Operational Statistics attached as inclosure 2).

(1) Units supported and maintenance standowns by number of days:

UNIT	LTH INFANTRY DIVISION					173d		MAINT DOWN
	1st Bde	2nd Bde	3rd Bde	TF Fighter	Abn Bde	Other		
TRP A	35	7	20	--	--	18	12	
TRP B	57	7	--	11	--	7	10	
TRP C	--	--	--	--	81	--	11	
TRP D	21	1	12	12	--	36	10	

(2) 4th Infantry Division Operation Supported:

(a) The 4th Infantry Division's general operations plan is Operation HINES. The mission for Operation HINES is to conduct sustained, coordinated and combined offensive operations to destroy enemy main and local forces units, destroy or neutralize enemy base areas, interdict high-speed infiltration routes, conduct operations wherever possible with Army Republic of Vietnam and Government of Vietnam agencies to assist in the protection of urban areas, and to support Government of Vietnam Pacification efforts and civil programs.

(b) The Squadron supported the 4th Infantry Division's participation in the Government of Vietnam Pacification and Development Plan for 1969 (WASHINGTON AREA).

(c) Troop A, during the reporting period operated in support of the 1st and 2nd Brigade's of the 4th Infantry Division in the vicinity of AN KHE, the 3rd Brigade in the vicinity of CAMP ENARI, and conducted operations in 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry areas of operation located to the northeast and southeast of PLEIKU. During the first three weeks of November the troop operated to the southwest and west of AN KHE in support of the 1st Brigade and occasionally in support of the 3rd Brigade to the west of CAMP ENARI. During the last week of November, the 3rd Brigade was supported exclusively. Operations were against the 95-B and 18th North Vietnamese Army Regiments. In the month of December the troop conducted visual reconnaissance in the squadron's area of operation and occasionally in support of the 3rd Brigade to the west of CAMP ENARI. In the month of January the troop supported the 2nd Brigade Operation PUTNAM POWER to the northeast of AN KHE. Both Operations were search, clear, and destroy operations against the 3rd North Vietnamese Army Division. During the entire three months Troop A was very successful in locating the enemy base areas, bunker complexes, and infiltration routes. The aero rifle platoon was inserted 35 times to develop situations and search enemy complexes. The troop reported killing 58 VC/NVA during the period and a large number of enemy bunkers and structures were destroyed.

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(d) Troop B operated in support of TASK FORCE FIGHTER and Operation SPREAGINS WHITE in the BAN ME THOUT / BU PRANG area. Operation WAYNE THURST, a 4th Infantry Division operation, was supported by the troop operating in the AN KHE area. Operation SPREAGINS WHITE, a 1st Brigade operation was conducted from 11 November 1969 to 29 December 1969 in the same area as TASK FORCE FIGHTER. Troop B's mission of reconnaissance, security and surveillance in support of the 23rd Division, Army Republic of Vietnam remained the same during both operations. (An after action report on the FIGHTER/SPREAGINS WHITE operation is attached at inclosure 4). The Troop returned to squadron control at the end of December and in January supported operation WAYNE THURST and operation PUTNAM POWER in the vicinity of AN KHE against the 3d North Vietnamese Army Division and the 18th North Vietnamese Regiment. B Troop was successful in discovering enemy base areas, infiltration routes and bunker complexes. The weather during November hampered the troop's operations to a large extent. A large number of enemy bunkers and structures were destroyed by the troop. B Troop reported killing 34 VC/NVA during the period.

(e) Troop C provided reconnaissance, security and surveillance for the 173d Airborne Brigade. The Brigade was engaged in a pacification program in the populated coastal areas from QUI NHON north to the I Corps border. Troop C targeted its operation against the 3d North Vietnamese Army Division and the 2nd Viet Cong Regiment which were believed to be in the mountainous AN LAO VALLEY area and CROWS FOOT area (BR7480) to the west of the coastal plains. During the period weather hampered the troop's operation, often denying access to the mountainous enemy base areas. The troop operated along the lower coastal areas against local force Viet Cong when access to the base areas was not possible. Enemy elements engaged during the period were usually squad size or smaller. Numerous bunker complexes and tunnels were discovered. C Troop destroyed numerous structures and bunkers, captured several Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army soldiers and reported several kills. By employing organic firepower, air strikes and artillery the troop was very successful in interdicting enemy movement from the mountain base areas to the coastal villages.

(f) Troop D returned to Squadron at CAMP EMARI on 13 November. It had been OPCON to TASK FORCE FIGHTER in the BAN ME THOUT/BU PRANG area and its mission had been to provide security for the BAN ME THOUT ammunition supply point and to provide a ready reaction force for B Troop. (See Inclosure 4, after action report on TASK FORCE FIGHTER). From 13 November to 13 December the troop conducted search and clear missions in the 4th Division TAOR vicinity of CAMP EMARI, and convoy security between CAMP EMARI and CHEO REO in support of the 4th Division. During the remainder of December the troop operated principally in the Squadron's northern assigned area of operations. The principal mission during this period was to conduct search and destroy operations and to be prepared to act as a reaction force for A Troop which was conducting a visual reconnaissance in the same area. 3 January through 23 January, the troop supported the 4th Infantry Division in the vicinity of AN KHE. The troop served as road security between CAMP RADCLIFF at AN KHE and FIRE BASE EMELIA BR475597. They returned to CAMP EMARI on 23 January and conducted several small operations in the CAMP EMARI TAOR. During the November and December operations several large rice caches were found by the troop. There were no significant incidents during January.

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(g) K Company (RANGER) of the 75th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division came under operational control of the Squadron on 16 December. The long range reconnaissance patrols proved to be very valuable to the Squadron in finding, observing and ambushing VC/NVA elements. The long range reconnaissance patrol teams directed the troop elements into several enemy elements. K Company supported the Squadron operations in its northern and southern assigned AO's in December. In January the company was employed in a screening role for the 4th Infantry Division's operations in the vicinity of AN KHE. The element was made OPCON to the 1st and 2nd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division on 23 January.

e. (U) Organization. No change since last ORLL.

f. (U) Training.

(1) The Army Aviation Refresher Training School Program: the maintenance program of the squadron continues to be greatly enhanced as a result of refresher training provided by these courses. (Inclosure 3)

(2) Aviation Training: (Inclosure 3)

(3) Special Training

(a) One individual completed the Jungle Environmental Survival Training Course in the Philippine Islands.

(b) One individual completed the PACAF Life Support School at Okinawa.

g. (C) Logistics:

(1) Supplies:

(a) Class I - Rations for squadron elements at CAMP EMARI were drawn from the 4th Infantry Division at AN KHE, rations for Troops A, B and D were drawn from the 1st Logistical Command Logistical at BAN ME THOUT-EAST prior to their return to base camp and C Troop drew their rations from the Logistical Command at AN SON.

(b) Class II - Packaged POL products were requisitioned through the 88th Supply and Service Battalion and issued by S-4 to the troops. POL products for A Troop were supplied by the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at AN KHE, the requirements for C Troop were supplied by the 1st Logistical Command at AN SON and those for B and D Troops were supplied by the 1st Logistical Command Logistical Support Activity at BAN ME THOUT-East prior to their return to base camp.

(d) Class IV - Construction was acquired through the local PA&E by unit commanders.

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(e) Class V - Ammunition was requisitioned from Ammunition supply
Points 340, 341 and unnumbered ASP's located at BAM ME THOUT-EAST and QUI NHON.

(f) Class VII - Major end items were requisitioned from the 88th
Supply and Service Battalion.

(2) Requisitions submitted during the quarter:

Nonexpendable - 324

Requisitions completed - 64

Requisitions cancelled - 118

Turn-ins - 358

(3) A reconciliation of all outstanding requisitions was made with the
88th Supply and Service Battalion each month.

(4) Report of survey submitted - 16

(5) Combat losses submitted - 13

h. (U) Communications; Signal and Message Center Operations.

(1) General: During this quarter the number of messages processed by
the message center remained relatively constant. Although total messages sent out
dropped by approximately 400, the total message received increased by approximat-
ly the same. During this quarter the Squadron Communications Platoon maintained
a forward detachment, to include RTT and a switch board, at BAM ME THOUT-East
until 10 Dec 69. Only 1 Jan 70 a forward element was again deployed with RTT
capability, to AN KIL. The unit was still operational at the end of the quarter.

(2) Operational Statistics: (See Inclosure 5)

1. (U) Material.

(1) Aircraft maintenance support is provided to the Squadron by two
direct support units as indicated below:

UNIT/LOCATION

HHT, CAMP ENARI, PLEIKU
A TROOP, CAMP ENARI, PLEIKU
B TROOP, CAMP ENARI, PLEIKU
C TROOP, LANE AAF, AN SON

DSU/LOCATION

60TH DSU, CAMP HOLLOWAY, PLEIKU
60TH DSU, CAMP HOLLOWAY, PLEIKU
60TH DSU, CAMP HOLLOWAY, PLEIKU
79TH DSU, QUI NHON

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry
Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CS FOR-65 (R2) (U)

(2) Vehicle maintenance support is provided by two direct support units as indicated below:

<u>UNIT/LOCATION</u>	<u>DSU/LOCATION</u>
HMT, CAMP ENARI, PLEIKU	62d Maint Bn, CAMP WILSON, PLEIKU
A TROOP, CAMP ENARI, PLEIKU	62d Maint Bn, CAMP WILSON, PLEIKU
B TROOP, CAMP ENARI, PLEIKU	62d Maint Bn, CAMP WILSON, PLEIKU
C TROOP, LANE ARMY AIRFIELD, AN SON	5th Maint Bn, QUI NHON
D TROOP, CAMP ENARI, PLEIKU	62d Maint Bn, CAMP WILSON, PLEIKU

(3) When B Troop was located at BAN ME THOUT a portion of the unit's maintenance element was located with the troop to perform unscheduled maintenance and light combat damage. All heavy maintenance, was accomplished at CAMP ENARI. The organic and attached maintenance elements of A Troop moved with the troop when it was deployed from AN KHE to CAMP ENARI.

(4) Statistics on aircraft strength and availability is included in inclosure 8.

j. (U) Civil Affairs:

(1) General: Major areas of concentration during the last quarter were live stock development, education, recreation, sanitation, renovation of public buildings and sponsoring of social events.

(2) Operation and Training Activities:

(a) PLEI POO MGA (AR803366) During the last quarter the Civil Affairs Team gave instruction for proper maintenance and use of the M1 and M2 carbine to its RF/PF force. A visit was made to a neighboring village (PLEI BROCC RONGAL) and 30 children were persuaded to enroll and attend the PLEI POO MGA school. Maximum effort to provide transportation for the children was also undertaken. Another teacher was acquired and materials are being obtained for adding another room to the school house.

(b) LA SON (AR817376) During the past quarter the Civil Affairs Team had one girl enrolled in a three month ~~course~~ for nursing at PLEIKU PROVINCE Hospital.

(3) Logistics: The Civil Affairs received support from LE TRONG DISTRICT, the Squadron Chaplain, PLEIKU AIR BASE S5, personal resources of team members, PLEIKU Hospital, 4th Medical Battalion and the 4th Infantry Division G5.

(4) Civil Affairs: The following is a list of projects completed during the last quarter.

(a) Education: Painting of the school houses, resupplying of basic school material and arrangements for the hiring of another school teacher were accomplished.

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(b) Sanitation:

(1) The S-5 team improved the shower facilities and provided a place to wash clothing.

(2) A general clean up program was conducted throughout both villages, and soap was distributed.

(c) Stock Development: Four cows were received from LE TRUONG District and shelters were distributed.

(d) Recreation: The team built a play ground at PLEI POO MGA, and a temporary swimming pool which was a great success.

(e) Renovations: The remodeling of two council houses, one church and one school house was completed.

(f) Social Events: The team sponsored two Catholic Youth Conventions, which attended by youths from three different districts and two end of year parties, attended by school children and their parents.

(g) Psychological Operations: Movies were shown and leaflets were distributed to the villagers.

(h) Transportation: Transportation was provided to move the people to medical facilities, market and also to transport children to and from school.

(i) Misc: The team distributed approximately 4,000 lbs of food and provide 2 miles of barbed wire for Perimeter defense.

k. (U) Accident Prevention:

(1) The accident rate per 100,000 flying hours was 40.8 for this quarter.

(2) Accident rate statistic for this quarter are as attached at Inclosure 9.

(3) Accident Summary for quarter by month:

1. 1 Nov 69, B Troop AH-1G #68-15047, Pilot CPT Schelcher, Major damage. pilot experienced loss of direction control on takeoff and aborted. After successfully landing the aircraft, the pilot attempt to pick the aircraft up to a hover, the tail turned to the right with the tail rotor striking an engineer stake resulting in major damage. There were no injuries.

2. 20 Nov 69, C Troop, OH-6A #67-16086, Pilot WO1 Exner, Aircraft was totally destroyed. The pilot experienced an apparent antitorque failure while conducting

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a low altitude, low speed visual reconnaissance. Aircraft went into rapid, 360 degree turns, crashed into the trees and burned upon impact. Pilot was killed and observer sustained serious injuries.

(b) December Four accidents.

4 Dec 69, C Troop, AH-1G #67-15642, Pilot WO1 Mergen, Major damage. The engine failed during normal operation. The pilot was on a visual reconnaissance mission over adverse terrain. He autorotated into a river bed and did an outstanding job in limiting damage to the aircraft. There were no injuries.

11 Dec 69, A Troop, OH-6A #67-16245, Pilot WO1 Bierman, Major damage. Engine failed due to fuel exhaustion. Pilot used incorrect autorotative procedures to an adequate forced landing area. There were no injuries.

26 Dec 69, C Troop, OH-6A #66-17753, Pilot CPT Halby, Major damage. Pilot did not have sufficient altitude to recover from a low altitude, low air-speed, downwind turn while performing a visual reconnaissance. There were no injuries.

30 Dec 69, A Troop, OH-6A #67-16250, Pilot CPT Robinson, Aircraft totally destroyed. Aircraft was flying over gross weight under high density altitude and gusty wind conditions. Pilot made low altitude, low speed downwind turn and crashed into the trees. There was no fire. Two (2) serious injuries and one (1) minor injury resulted.

(c) January: No Accidents.

1. (U) Religious Functions.

(1) The Squadron Chaplain, during the quarter, conducted a total of 15 Sunday and 7 weekday Protestant services, with a total attendance of 1,278.

(2) Catholic Mass was conducted 12 times with a total attendance of 262.

(3) Religious services were conducted at CAMP EMARI, LONG AIRFIELD, AN KHE and BAN ME THOUT.

(4) The 7/17 Cav Chaplain, during the quarter, made 401 visits to troop areas and contacted 1,106 individuals. The Chaplain visited 37 men in the hospitals.

(5) The 7/17th Cav Chaplain distributed 4 boxes of used clothing to the villagers of PLEI POO NGO. The clothing came from Rev. James Beadle, BUTTE, MONTANA, USA.

m. (U) Medical Section:

(1) The medical section of this squadron consists of a flight surgeon,

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11 medics and one section sergeant. A medic is assigned to each of the aero rifle platoons and one to each of the three platoons of D Troop. The forward aid station at BAN NE THOUT-E-ST was closed on 27 December 1969. With the exception of C Troop, all troop receive their primary medical care from the Squadron aid station. C Troop remains at LANE AIRFIELD, LAO, and receive their medical aid from the 546th Medical Detachment.

(2) At CAMP ENLARI, the Squadron aid station is supported by the 4th Medical Battalion of the 4th Infantry Division, with laboratory, X-ray and medical supplies.

(3) Medical Statistics:

	<u>Previous Qtr.</u>	<u>Rept. Qtr.</u>
Patient visits	765	797
Immunizations	548	1766
Veneral Disease	24	52
Malaria	2	0
Diarrhea	2	0
Hepatitis	0	1

2. (C) Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. (U) Personnel: None

b. (U) Intelligence: Survival Rations for Air Crewmembers.

(1) Observations: Two air crewmen of this command were shot down on 2 November, captured and later returned to U.S. control. They pointed out that the intensity of enemy activity in the area in which they were shot down prevented freedom of movement to obtain food during the period.

(2) Evaluations: A need existed for a concentrated food that could have been carried on the individual. A long range patrol ration (FSN: 9870-926-9222) fits very easily in pockets of Nomex Flight Uniforms. One man can sustain himself several days on one ration of this type.

(3) Recommendation: That all aviation units obtain this item and issue one per air crewmember.

(4) Command Action: Long range patrol Rations (FSN: 8970-926-9222) were drawn by the Squadron S4 and issued to the Troop Supply sections for controlled issue to air crewmembers.

c. (C) Operations:

(1) Operational Control (OPCON) of the long range reconnaissance patrol (LRRP) in the Air Cavalry.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry
Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CS FOR-65 (R2) (U)

(a) Observation: The 7/17 Air Cavalry Squadron working directly with LRRP teams, was able to rapidly react to intelligence information provided by the LRRP teams in order to locate and neutralize detected enemy elements.

(b) Evaluation: The Air Cavalry Troop's ability to provide immediate visual reconnaissance with observation aircraft, instant and accurate gunship fire and infantry exploitation of contacts is extremely effective in expanding the reconnaissance effort of US Forces.

(c) Recommendation: That LRRP teams be placed in an OPCON status to the Air Cavalry Squadron if they are operating in the same area. This will enhance the enemy intelligence gathering and provide quick interdiction and neutralization. Assets for insertions and extractions must be provided from other resources.

(d) Command Action: This unit employs this technique when operating in support of the 4th Inf Div.

(2) Effective Employment of Platoon Mortar Squads.

(a) Observation: During troop operations the mortar sections of each of the platoons were frequently employed as a battery located at the troop night location while the platoons operated in the AO.

(b) Evaluation: The mortar squads were frequently detached from their respective platoons and there was a tendency on the part of the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants to neglect their mortar squads in matters of training and supervision. The operational efficiency of the mortar sections declined in direct proportion to the amount of time spent detached from the platoons and employed in battery.

(c) Recommendations: That commanders and platoon leaders in similar situations be aware of the hazards of employment of mortar squads in this manner, and employ mortar squads with the platoons whenever possible.

(d) Command Action: This problem is now given command emphasis. The platoon leaders spend more time training and supervising their mortar crews. This has had effect of raising the morale and efficiency of the 3 mortar squads. One additional action was to emphasize taking the mortars with the various platoons while operating in the AO rather than leaving them on the unit night location.

(3) Disadvantages of Using M-60 Machine Gun in the OH-6A.

(a) Observation: While firing the M-60 Machine gun from the observer's seat of the OH-6A the expended brass has a tendency to fly against the instrument panel and damage some of the gauges.

(b) Evaluation: The expended brass flying against the instrument panel caused damage to several instruments. A metal sheet was devised to deflect the expended brass down and away from the instrument panel. The present

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shield undergoes constant changes and improvements, it has been effective in eliminating damage to the aircraft instrument panel.

(c) Recommendation: That all units employing an observer armed with the M-60 machine gun in the OH-6A employ a deflection shield.

(d) Command Action: M-60 machine guns are not carried in the OH-6A without a brass deflector.

(h) Safe handling of grenades.

(e) Observation: This unit has had several instances of unsafe handling of grenades.

(b) Evaluation: On one occasion this unit experienced a situation of having a white phosphorus grenade accidentally detonated while the aircraft was on the ground.

(c) Recommendations: All grenades should be stored in form fitting cans to insure that if the pin is accidentally pulled or jarred loose, the grenade handle will be secured by the side of the can. The form fitting cans should be firmly attached at appropriate locations in the aircraft.

(d) Command Action: All grenades are being stored in ready made metal cans until ready for use. These cans have been properly secured inside the aircraft.

d. (U) ORGANIZATION. NONE

e. (U) TRAINING. NONE

f. (U) LOGISTICS. Modification of class V basic load for the Air Cavalry Squadron.

(1) OBSERVATION: This squadron has experienced ten troop movements within the past year. Five of these movements were of the PCS type. These movements were expedited by not having a full basic load of class V on hand.

(2) EVALUATION: During the past year the squadron has successfully operated by maintaining a modified basic load of class V, which was computed from average daily expenditures of a troop in contact. This modification has enabled the troops of the squadron to maintain greater mobility and to move within the time period allotted. The process of turning in the basic load and drawing another with each move required four S&P trailers and two additional days.

(3) Recommendations: It is recommended that USARV Reg 735-28 be reviewed to reduce the number of rounds per weapon for the Air Cavalry Squadron, to facilitate the Air Mobile Concept.

(4) Command Action: The modified basic loads were consolidated and maintained by the S-4 Section for those troops located at Squadron Headquarters.

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The S-4 had the responsibility to insure that the Squadron Class V level was consistent with the modified basic load. (Request for approval of the modified basic load has been forwarded thru command channels).

g. (U) COMMUNICATIONS: Deploying a forward detachment with high frequency communications and Radio Teletype capability from the Squadron Communications Platoon.

(1) Observations: During the past quarter the Squadron maintained a forward communication element for all but 20 days of the period.

(2) Evaluations: The Radio Teletype equipment at the forward area was operational 80% of the time. The only TO&E equipment available to perform this function is the VSC-2 (3/4 Ton mounted RTT) and by maintaining two communications centers there is no back-up equipment available.

(3) Recommendations: Recommend that TO&E be changed to include a GRC-142 (3/4 Ton Van mounted RTT) to be used when forward communication element is required for an extended period of time.

(4) Command Actions: Coordination with 17th CAG Signal and 1st Avn Bde has been made and a request for modification to the TO&E will be submitted in the near future.

h. (U) MATERIAL: AH-1G Main Rotor Hubs

(1) Observation: Failure of Teflon Bearing in AH1G main rotor hub.

(2) Evaluations:

(a) Indication of failure has been a binding of the collective while bleeding off the accumulator during shut down.

(b) TM55-1520-221-20 C5, page 3-10, dated April 1969, requires that the main rotor hub be removed and inspected every 300 hours. This unit has experienced a high failure rate of the teflon bearings prior to the 300 hour inspection. The bearings that have failed are as follows: Bearing FSN 3120-982-0804, P/N 540-011-110-13, Page 370, Figure 80, Item 41, TM 55-1520-221-35P, Bearing FSN 3120-974-6496, P/N 540-011-140-9, page 370, Figure 80, Item 55, TM 55-1520-221-35P.

(c) In an attempt to determine the cause of premature bearing failure, the unit has conducted extensive tests. It has been discovered that new bearings received are packed in a corrosive preventive compound in contravention of TM 55-1520-221-35, Section II, Chapter 8, Dated April 69. The tests disclosed that the compound cannot be fully removed from the bearing without going through an extensive clearing and heating process.

(3) Recommendations: A different method be devised for protecting the bearing from corrosion while in shipment.

(4) Command Actions:

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(a) All maintenance personnel within the unit have been informed of the problem.


(b) An EIR has been submitted on improper packing procedures. EIR's for bearing deterioration are submitted as failures occur.

(c) This unit has coordinated with the 34th General Support Group concerning this problem and is now awaiting an answer to the finding of the investigation

i. (U) MEDICAL: None

j. (U) SAFETY: None

9 Incl
as
Incl 1,2,6,7 and 9 wd, HQ DA


GEORGE S. MURRY
LTC, AR
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

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INFO COPIES

CG, 4th Inf Div, ATTN: AVDDH-CG, APO 96262
1 Each Organic Troop

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AVB/CB-5C (10 Feb 70) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 7th Squadron, 17th
Cavalry, Period Ending 31 January, ACF CSFOR-65 (h2) (b)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 17TH AVIATION GROUP (COMBAT), APO 96240 24 February 1970

TO: Department of the Army (ACSFOR, DA), Washington, D.C. 30319
Commanding General, I Field Force Vietnam, APO 96350

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the attached report, considers it to be adequate, and concurs with the contents as stated, except as indicated below.

2. (C) The following comments and recommendations are submitted:

a. Section I, Operations: Significant Activities.

(1) Paragraph 1b(3), Page 3, Incl #2, Personnel. Nonconcur. The reported figures should agree with IDS reported 31 Jan 70. The IDS figures for the 31 of Jan are: OFF-82, 10-120, EM-797, Total-999. (Unit strength should be Inclosure 2 (Page 1)).

(2) Paragraph 1c(2), Page 3, Intelligence. This paragraph should be summarized and lengthy accounts of significant enemy activity be attached to the OK as an inclosure.

(3) Paragraph 1d, Page 7, Operations. (Operational Statistics attached as Inclosure 2, should read Inclosure #3).

(4) Paragraph 1f(1)(2), Page 9, Training. The Army Aviation Refresher Training School program and Aviation Training listed as Inclosure 3 should read Inclosure #4, but is Inclosure #6.

(5) Paragraph 1d, Page 9, Combat Operation after Action Report. Entry should be made for listing them as Combat Operation after Action Reports. (Inclosures are misnumbered as Inclosures 4 and 5.)

(6) Paragraph 1f, Page 9, Training. This paragraph should indicate the number of days during the reporting period that the unit engaged in training. Reference USARV Regulation 525-15, Para 5b(1)(c).

(7) Paragraph 1h(2), Page 10, Communication. Operational Statistics: (see Inclosure 5) should read Inclosure #7.

(8) Paragraph 1k, Page 12, Accident Prevention. This paragraph should refer to Inclosure #9, Safety Statistics for the Period.

b. Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

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AVB.CB-SC (10 Feb 70) 1st Ind 24 February
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 7th Squadron, 17th
Cavalry, Period Ending 31 January, 1969 CSFOA-65 (R2) (U)

(1) Paragraph 2f, Page 16, Modification of Class V Basic Load for the Air Cavalry Squadron. This headquarters has not received a request for approval of a modified basic load. Reference USARV (Conf) Regulation 735-28, Para 5c, "Commanders are authorized and should delete items and/or reduce quantities as appropriate for the units mission, geographical location, organization, and load-carrying capability."

(2) Paragraph 2h(2)(b), Page 17, Material. The TI 55-1520-221-35P reference in lines 5 thru 7 of this paragraph is dated Aug 1969.

(3) Paragraph 2h(2)(c), Page 17, Material. The page number for this reference is 8-10.

(4) Paragraph 2h(3), Page 17, Material. Concur. This problem is fully documented by EIA's and letters to 34th Group. Further recommend the bearings be shipped in dry pack vacuum sealed cans.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Robert C. Rice
ROBERT C. RICE
1LT, AGC
Adjutant

CF:
CO, 7/17th Air Cav Sqdn

AVFMA-CC-HIST (10 Feb 70) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCL, COMOR-65 (R2) (U)

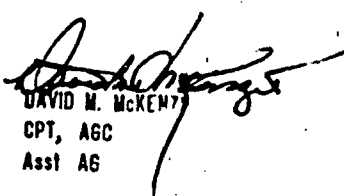
DA, Headquarters, I Field Force Vietnam, APO S.F. 96350 28 MAR 1970

TO: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO S.F. 96384

1. This headquarters has reviewed and evaluated subject Operational Report-Lessons Learned and forwarding indorsement and concurs, except as stated below.

2. Reference Operational Control of LRRP, paragraph 2d(1): Nonconcur. The mission of LRRP's should be planned at a higher level than squadron. This has proven successful and placing them under the operational control (OPCON) of a squadron would greatly decrease their ability to accomplish their long-range mission.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


DAVID M. MCKENRY
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

CF:

- 1 - CO, 17th AVN GP (CBT) (LESS ORLL)
- 1 - Co, 7th Sqdn, 17th CAV (LESS ORLL)

AVBAGC-0 (10 Feb 70) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry
for period ending 31 Jan 70, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384

5 APR 1970

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, AFVN: AVBAGC-DST,
APO 96375

Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Pacific, AFPM: CMAP-DI,
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310


1. This headquarters has reviewed subject report and concurs with the
contents and inclusions.

2. The following comments are considered pertinent:

a. Paragraph 2.c.(3), page 17, recommends a TOI change that would
include a GRC 142 (3/4 Ton Van mounted RTT) to support forward communication
elements. Nonconcur. The requirement to support a temporary operation
should be met by 100 day loan or an intra-group hand-receipt for additional
equipment needed. This headquarters is advising units of alternatives to
recommending a change to TOI/AROL.

b. Paragraph 2.b., page 14, discusses the use of long range patrol
rations as emergency rations for downed air crews. Concur. This
headquarters is advising subordinate units of availability of long range
patrol rations for air crewmembers.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


ARTHUR W. LITTLE
CPT AGC
Asst AG.

AVHGC-DST (10 Feb 70) 4th Ind

13 APR 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry,
Period Ending 31 January, RCS CS FOR-65 (R2)(U)

Headquarters, United States Army, Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

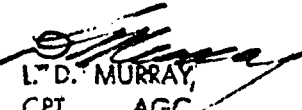
1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1970 from Headquarters, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry and concurs with the comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Safe Handling of Grenades", page 16, paragraph 2c(4): concur with the recommendation as a technique of safely stowing grenades aboard aircraft. This information will be published in the USARV Aviation Safety Weekly Summary.

b. Reference item concerning "AH-1G Main Rotor Hub Teflon Bearings", page 17, paragraph 2h, and paragraphs 2b(2)(3)(4), 1st Indorsement. As a result of the SIR submitted by this unit, AVSCOM has disseminated to all commands the procedure for cleaning these bearings. This information will be published in a 34th General Support Group newsletter.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


L.D. MURRAY,
CPT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy turn:
1st Avn Bde
7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry

GPOP-DT (10 Feb 70) 5th Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry for Period
Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 23 APR 70

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

D.D. Cline
D.D. CLINE
2LT, AGC
Asst AG

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OPERATIONAL STATISTICS FOR THE PERIOD

1. (C) Results

UNIT	SORTIES		TROOPS LIFTED	CARGO (TONS)	KIA'S		STRUCTURES	
	COMBAT	OTHER			CONF	UNCONF	DAM	DEST
HQ TRP	1526	552	872	52	----	-----	---	----
TRP A	9458	1007	2300	1	34	24	2	78
TRP B	3274	350	512	0	58	31	0	72
TRP C	6771	673	2245	0	9	0	0	82
TRP D	----	-----	----	-----	----	-----	---	22
TOTAL	21, 029	2, 590	5, 929	53	101	55	2	254

DETAINÉES: 158

Enemy Material Captured:

- 11 - SKS Rifles
- 9 - AK-47 Rifle
- 1 - AK-50 Rifle
- 1 - 7.62 LMG (RPM)
- 1 - 9mm Russian Pistol
- 1 - B-40 Rocket Launcher
- 1 - U.S. Browning automatic Rifle
- 1 - U.S. M-16 Rifle
- 3 - U.S. .30 Caliber Carbine
- 1 - U.S. M-79 Grenade Launcher
- 2 - U.S. M-1 Carbines
- 1 - U.S. 81mm Mortar Tube
- 1 - U.S. M18A1 Claymore Mine
- 3 - B-40 Rounds
- 1 - 60mm Mortar Round
- 400 - AK-47 Rounds
- 2 - Homemade Grenades
- 1 - Radio (type unidentified)
- 1 - Gas Explosive Igniter
- 38 - NVA Rucksacks
- 1 - Chm Meter
- 1 - M-2 Gunner's Quadrant
- 2 - Canteens
- 1 - NVA Mess Kit
- 1 - Document Pouch
- 10,000 - pounds of rice

Enemy Material Destroyed:

- 4 - 60mm Mortar Baseplates
- 2 - NVA Rucksacks
- 11 - Sampans
- 6,345 - pounds of rice
- 400 - pounds of grain

2. (C) Aircraft Lost and Damaged:

Inclosure 3

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DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DMR 5200.10

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>AIRCRAFT TYPE</u>	<u>LOST</u>	<u>DAMAGED</u>
HQ TROOP	UH-1H	2 (Note 1)	1
TROOP A	OH-6A	6 (Note 2)	3
	UH-1H	2 (Note 3)	4
	AH-1G	5 (Note 4)	2
TROOP B	OH-6A	2 (Note 5)	2
	UH-1H	1 (Note 6)	0
	AH-1G	1 (Note 7)	2
TROOP C	OH-6A	4 (Note 8)	4
	UH-1H	1 (Note 9)	1
	AH-1G	1 (Note 10)	1

NOTE 1. One combat damage, one extensive maintenance

NOTE 2. Four were combat damage, Two were crash damage

NOTE 3. Both were combat damage.

NOTE 4. Three were combat damage, Two were extensive maintenance

NOTE 5. Both were combat damage.

NOTE 6. Extensive Maintenance

NOTE 7. Combat Damage

NOTE 8. Two were combat damage, Two were crash damage.

NOTE 9. Extensive Maintenance

NOTE 10. Crash Damage

3. (C) Flying Hour Statistics for the Period:

a. The average flying hours by type aircraft by troop:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>OH-6A</u>	<u>AH-1G</u>	<u>UH-1H</u>
HQ TROOP	---	---	197.8
TROOP A	200.8	206.3	197.7
TROOP B	154.3	142.6	147.8
TROOP C	152.0	136.6	170.1

b. The average flying hours by type aircraft:

<u>OH-6A</u>	<u>AH-1G</u>	<u>UH-1H</u>
189.0	153.6	163.0

c. The cumulative flying hours by troop and by type aircraft:

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CH-6</u>	<u>AN-1G</u>	<u>UH-1H</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
HO TROOP	-----	-----	989	989
TROOP A	2008	1857	1586	5451
TROOP B	1513	1284	1183	4010
TROOP C	1520	1231	1361	4112
TOTAL	5071	4372	5119	14562

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 7TH SQUADRON, 17TH CAVALRY
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96232

AV AGO-OC

10 February 1970

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report

THRU: Commanding Officer
17th Aviation Group (Combat)
APO 96210

Commanding General
1st Aviation Brigade
APO 96304

Commanding General
USARV
APO 96375

TO: Commanding General
United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
ATTN: MACJ343
APO 96222

1. (U) NAME AND AWE OF OPERATION: 17TH INFANTRY DIVISION OPERATION TASK FORCE
FIGHTER/STRENGTHS WHITE, Economy of Force/Pacification, Respectively.
2. (U) DATES OF OPERATION:
 - a. TASK FORCE FIGHTER: 1 September 1969 - 11 November 1969
 - b. STRENGTHS : IFF: 11 November 1969 - 29 December 1969
3. (U) LOCATION: II Corps Tactical Zone; portion of III Corps Tactical Zone;
BURLAC AND QUANG BAC PROVINCE.
4. (U) COMMAND AND CONTROL HEADQUARTERS:
 - a. Overall supervision was IFFV.
 - b. Missions were assigned initially by TF FIGHTER: Later by 1st Brigade
17th Infantry Division.
5. (U) REPORTING OFFICER: LTC George S. Murry, Commanding Officer, 7th
Squadron, 17th Cavalry. Other major unit commanders:

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

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NAME	UNIT	D. PES
LTC WUSSEL L JOHNS	TF FIGHTER	1 Sep - 11 Nov 69
COL JOSEPH E MCCARTHY	1st Bde, 4th Inf Div	11 Nov - 6 Dec 69
COL HOWARD D TOW	1st Bde, 4th Inf Div	8 Dec - 29 Dec 69
MAJ BILLY J BOWLING	B Trp, 7/17 Cav	1 Sep - 29 Dec 69
MAJ RALPH BURR	S3, MACV TM33	30 Aug - 11 Nov 69
CPT KENNETH J LININGER	D Trp, 7/17 Cav	30 Aug - 11 Nov 69

6. (U) TASK ORGANIZATION:

a. TASK FORCE FIGHTER: The 7/17 Cavalry (-) consisting of B and D Troop were OPCON. D Troop was returned to Squadron control on 11 November

7. (U) SUPPORTING FORCES: Reference 4th Infantry Division After Action Report (RCS: MAJ 3-32 (R-2) to be published, and 4th Infantry Division After Action Report (RCS: MACJ 3-32 (R-21) dated 13 January 1970.

8. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

a. Prior to the start of the operation major NVA maneuver elements associated with the B-3 Front had been occupying sanctuary in the tri-border area. During late July and early August, the location of the 66th Regiment, 28th Regiment and portions of the 40th Regiment could not accurately be determined. During August the B-23 Special Forces Detachment, BAN ME THOUT and MACV Advisory Team at GIA NGHIA had received several intelligence reports that indicated a major enemy buildup was taking place inside the CAMBODIAN border in the DUC LAP/BU PRANG area. Recently repaired roads were reported along the border northwest of BU PRANG by aerial observers reconnoitering the area. It was estimated that as many as 15,000 men believed to be from the 5th NVA Division were in CAMBODIA near the II-III CTZ boundary. Positive identification and accurate strength estimates of enemy units were not obtained until after mid-October. When major enemy elements committed themselves in the BU PRANG/DUC LAP area they employed heavy shellings and vigorous ground probes in an attempt to attain rapid victories in the area. Their actions forced the abandonment of several fire bases supporting the DUC LAP/BU PRANG area. The enemy was unable to sustain himself in repeated contacts as a result of the heavy toll of casualties and equipment losses inflicted by friendly ground forces with tactical air and artillery support. Enemy activity subsided in early December and the major enemy units withdrew to sanctuaries in CAMBODIA.

b. ENEMY UNIT IDENTIFICATIONS:

(1) K-394 NVA Artillery Battalion. The main body of this unit was identified south of DUC LAP on 28 October. Their major effort was directed at attacking allied bases in the vicinity of DUC LAP. This unit had the capability of employing ground and stand off attacks using 82mm mortars and 122 mm rockets

(2) 28th Regiment: This unit had three Battalions with 380 men each. It was identified on 6 November south of DUC LAP in the vicinity of YU7867. The 28th Regiment had the support of one anti-aircraft company. DUC LAP CIDG Camp and two ARVN Command posts in the vicinity of DUC LAP were the targets of the Regiment

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(3) 66th Regiment: The 66th Regiment was identified on 16 November in the vicinity of BU PRUNG CIDG Camp. A prisoner of war captured on that date stated that the regiment was composed of nine support companies. The maneuver battalions of the 66th Regiment made several contacts with ARVN and Mobile Strike Force units operating in the BU PRUNG area.

(4) K-33 Battalion, 40th Artillery Regiment: Documents captured 8 November 1969 at YU498521 mentioned the K-33 Battalion and the 40th Artillery Regiment. The interrogation of a Prisoner of War from the 66th Regiment revealed that the K-33 Battalion and the 40th Regiment was supporting the 66th Regiment. This unit had 85mm field guns and 105 guns. They were believed to be responsible for some of the artillery shelling of BU PRUNG CIDG Camp.

(5) K-37 Sapper Battalion: This unit is considered the elite of sapper units in the IICTZ. The K-37 Sapper Battalion had one company supporting the 28th Regiment in the vicinity of DUC LAP and one company supporting the 66th Regiment in the BU PRUNG area. Their mission was to attack allied bases in 10 to 15 man groups. Elements in the BU PRUNG area were unsuccessful in an attempted penetration of the perimeter during the first week of December.

(6) Unidentified units fired artillery from positions inside CAMBODIA on BU PRUNG CIDG Camp during an intense shelling period late November and early December.

c. Terrain: Elements of the Squadron supporting TASK FORCE FIGHTER were employed primarily in QUANG DUC PROVINCE. The province is primarily mountainous with elevations averaging 900 feet above sea level. The mountainous condition did not favor enemy movement in the area. They were advantageous for enemy use of recoilless rifles and other flat trajectory weapons on firebases in the BU PRUNG area. Routes of movements were noted primarily along trails near streams. The thick vegetation, primarily triple canopy jungle in most areas, afforded excellent concealment along routes of travel. QUANG DUC PROVINCE contains a preponderance of streams that generally flow southwesterly, and drain into larger tributaries that make their way to the MEXONG RIVER. Several rafts were sighted in streams throughout the province, indicating that the current and depths of some of the streams were obstacles to movements in the area but did not deter movement of the enemy rafts. Highway 14 is the major road in QUANG DUC PROVINCE. It is hard surfaced and in a serviceable condition in most areas. Militarily it was not significant during this operation for travel purposes. It was noted that the enemy forces had improved roads along the CAMBODIAN border by covering them with bamboo matting. There are several dirt trails northeast of BU PRUNG that afford excellent access to QUANG DUC PROVINCE in that area. The patterns of trails indicated that enemy forces followed the path of least resistance in most areas to avoid thick vegetation. It was pointed out by two returnees captured by enemy forces that the enemy made maximum use of the military crest of hill masses to build bunkered positions. Triple canopy vegetation limited aerial observation in several areas. The lack of landing zones limited employment of the aero rifle platoon and D Troop in their role as an airborne reconnaissance force in most areas reconnoitered by the air cavalry troop.

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d. Weather: QUANG DUC PROVINCE experienced heavy rains and ground fog that limited flying from September until early October. The rainy condition probably was a deciding factor for the enemy's delay until late October to launch their offensive in the area. The trafficability created by the rains would have made movement of heavy artillery pieces difficult if the enemy had attempted to move into the position they occupied during the height of their offensive. During September to mid-October, overcast conditions prevailed during the early morning hours. Ceilings lifted to 500-1000' during the day only to descend in the late afternoons. As the transition to the dry season occurred QUANG DUC PROVINCE had light ground fog that dissipated by late morning. Except for occasional overcast conditions in the late afternoon, skies were predominately high-scattered with unlimited visibility. High wind conditions were experienced during the latter part of November and early December. Temperatures were relatively moderate during the operation and had no significant affect on friendly or enemy operations.

9. (C) MISSION: B Troop 7/17 Cavalry was tasked to perform air and ground reconnaissance as an economy of force unit in general support of the 23rd ARVN Division. D Troop 7/17 Cavalry had the mission of providing air-mobile reaction force for B 7/17 and secured the ASP at Ban Me Thout-East.

10. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: In response to indicators that large enemy forces were preparing for an offensive, the 4th Infantry Division organized TF FIGHTER. B Troop and D Troop 7/17 Cavalry were deployed to Ban Me Thout-East and commenced operation in this assigned AO. With D Troop providing reaction, B Troop initiated extensive aerial reconnaissance. On November 11, TF FIGHTER was dissolved and 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division assumed control of the operation (SPREADING WHITE). The Brigade mission was to conduct a pacification program relieving the ARVN elements disposed in the vicinity of BAN ME THOUT to permit them to reinforce BU PHUNG and DUC LAP Special Forces camps. B Troop continued its mission of reconnaissance and surveillance. D Troop was released from OPCON on 11 November and returned to Squadron control at Camp Endri.

11. (C) EXECUTION:

a. Issuance of orders: TASK FORCE FIGHTER was formed by verbal order of the 4th Infantry Division. B and D Troop deployed on order under 7/17th Cavalry OPLAN 9-69, effective 30 August 69. B and D Troop moved overland and by organic aircraft and established a forward base at BAN ME THOUT-EAST on 31 August 1969. Initial coordination was effected with the 23rd ARVN Division and Special Forces Team A-236 at BU PHUNG.

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(YU493557). A liaison team was collocated with Team A-236. D Troop (-) was airlifted to GIA NGHIA. One platoon was left at BAN ME THOUT-EAST to assist in perimeter guard and ASP security.

b. TASK FORCE FIGHTER significant activities:

(1) 1 September 1969: B Troop commenced operations in the vicinity of BU PRANG. D Troop repositioned one platoon at BU PRANG to serve as a reaction force. No significant findings were reported.

(2) 5 September 1969: B Troop aircraft drew ground to air fire vicinity YU442608. Aerial Rifle Platoon inserted and confirmed four NVA KIA from AH-1G attack helicopters from B Troop. A bunker complex was also found in this area.

(3) 6-7 September 1969: Weather precluded extensive visual reconnaissance.

(4) 8 September 1969: Numerous bunkers and foxholes were observed vicinity, YU626468. Fields in the area and trail usage indicate activity of a platoon size element.

(5) 11 September 1969: An LOH observed two enemy evading into a bunker complex at YU656537. The ARP was inserted and swept the area, finding fifty bunkers. The two enemy fled the area.

(6) 14 September 1969: While enroute to CAMP BU PRANG, twenty enemy soldiers riding bicycles and armed with AK-47 were seen at YU640 540. The enemy took cover and the weather closed in before the situation could develop. Later, an LOH spotted one enemy near a bunker complex. Numerous ground to air fire reports were received. The attack helicopters engaged the area with unknown results.

(7) 17 September 1969: A VR was performed in BA203 with numerous sightings made of bunkers, structures and recent activity within the past 48 hours. A Base camp area was discovered vicinity YU489324. The area within 2,000 meters of this area was being cultivated. Several storage structures were found and destroyed. One enemy was engaged and killed at YU489323 and three others were killed at YU473319.

(8) 20 September 1969: Enemy activity was prevalent throughout BA203. D Troop convoy received B-40 rocket fire and sniper fire at AQ858837. Fire was returned with unknown results.

(9) 21 September 1969: Concern was mounting over the increase enemy indication in BA203. B Troop was targeted in this area for several to follow. At YU465319, two enemy soldiers were engaged and killed while working on a 12x40' bridge.

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(10) 22 September 1969: B Troop received the first casualty of the operation at YU573318. A LCH received ground-to-air fire, sustained two hits and experienced engine failure. The pilot was wounded in the leg. The aircraft crashed causing major damage. The AMP was inserted to secure the aircraft and crew. Numerous bunkers and trails showing recent usage were found in the area.

(11) 23 September 1969: Working south of CAMP BU FRANG, numerous bunkers, structures and trails were located. Crops were being harvested in the area daily.

(12) 25 September 1969: A possible bivouac area was observed southwest of BU FRANG. Five enemy soldiers were observed in the area and were engaged by attack helicopters with unknown results. At YU580320, two squads were engaged by LCH's and gunships. Ground-to-air fire was received. The number of enemy casualties could not be confirmed.

(13) 26 September 1969: Reconnaissance revealed that the enemy was still cultivating crops in BA203. Fresh trails in the area indicated movement by company size enemy forces daily. Several structures were destroyed.

(14) 27 September 1969: Attack helicopters engaged an enemy soldier at YU572312 resulting in one enemy KIL. Two machinegun positions were located with indication of usage in the last 24 hours.

(15) 29 September 1969: B Troop concentrated their efforts in BA203 with sighting of structures capable of housing forty to fifty individuals.

(16) 30 September 1969: Concern was mounting over the area north and northwest of BU FRANG. Weather had precluded B Troop from conducting surveillance in that area during September. B Troop was diverted from BA203 to support two contacts by the 13 Force. Results of the engagement were not known.

(17) 1-5 October 1969: The weather permitted limited VR in the primary area of interest, west and northwest of BU FRANG. A few trails were observed which indicated heavy usage. Trails were hard packed. No direction of travel could be determined.

(18) 6-9 October 1969: B Troop forced out of AO of BU FRANG due to weather; and conducted VR of BA203. Crop production was continuing and signs of increased activity were present. New structures and fighting positions were observed. Several were destroyed by gunships. At YU529350, ten structures were fired on, resulting in a large secondary explosion.

(19) 10 October 1969: B Troop reported seeing a jet aircraft resembling a MIG. The aircraft headed south, crossed the CAMBODIAN border, flew through the troop's tactical formation, and then flew north into CAMBODIA.

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This occurred vicinity of YU4059.

(20) 12 October 1969: Working twenty kilometers south of BU PRANG. B Troop aircraft engaged two enemy soldiers armed with AK-47's resulting in two possible KIA.

(21) 13 October 1969: A BDA of a heavy airstrike was conducted by B Troop vicinity of YU5032. Later VR in BU203 resulted in drawing ground fire on three different occasions. Attack helicopters engaged with unknown results.

(22) 14 October 1969: Along the border, west of BU PRANG, aircraft observed and engaged nine enemy soldiers carrying AK-47's and rucksacks. Six KIA were found after gunships engaged. Another enemy soldier was killed at YU404592. An aircraft from the 155th Assault Helicopter Company reported drawing ground fire at ZU0246. B Troop responded, engaged an enemy squad and confirmed 3 KIA and 1 KBA.

(23) 18 October 1969: After being down for weather for three days, B Troop entered the AO west of BU PRANG. LOH's observed three enemy riding bicycles. Attack helicopters engaged but vegetation precluded sightings of enemy casualties.

(24) 20 October 1969: B Troop was credited with four enemy KIA in an area northwest of BU PRANG. Several well used trails and recently cultivated fields were observed.

(25) 21 October 1969: Returning to the same AO as the previous day, B Troop aircraft observed numerous indications of increased enemy activity. Several structures, bunkers and hidden bicycles were destroyed. One secondary explosion 100' high was observed. One VC was taken under fire resulting in 1 VC KIA.

(26) 22 October 1969: Several VC were engaged west of BU PRANG on two different occasions, resulting in 2 enemy KIA and 1 KBA.

(27) 26 October 1969: Scouts destroyed two large structures and observed a large secondary explosion at YU879757. Aircraft engaged three more structures later that resulted in an additional secondary explosion and one enemy KIA.

(28) 27 October 1969: Working northwest of BU PRANG, a trail was observed that indicated usage by at least fifty individuals within the last 24-48 hours. A BDA was conducted resulting in eight structures and two KIA credited to the Air Force. At YU106647, B Troop was credited with one KBA.

(29) 28 October 1969: South of BU PRANG, one individual with an AK-47 was engaged resulting in one KIA. B Troop also supported a

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MIKE STRIKE FORCE in contact providing neutralization fires and employed an airstrike. A KBA credited to the Air Force.

(30) 29 October 1969: Fire Base KATE (YU483413) was receiving an attack. B Troop responded and supported the camp until late afternoon. B Troop hit a sniper it hit and killed two NVA. A KBA was reported by B Troop. CAMP BU PHANG also received nine rounds of 60mm mortar fire. B Troop sustained no casualties. From all indications the enemy was initiating his offensive in the area. For the next several days B Troop maintained contact with the enemy.

(31) 30 October 1969: Attack helicopters from B Troop supported contact around DUC LIP, BU PHANG, FB MATHA and FB KATE. At 0620 hours, FB KATE received a stand-off attack consisting of 75mm recoilless rifle and 60mm mortar fire. A platoon size probe was attempted but failed. Because of weather at B Troop's location they could not react until approximately 0800 hours. At 0907 hours CAMP DUC LIP received a stand-off attack. B Troop diverted and provided support in extracting the wounded personnel. At 0930 hours, FB KATE again came under a withering stand-off attack. The enemy probe was estimated to be a battalion size force. B Troop again diverted and took the enemy under fire. Results were unknown. At 1155 hours, a gunship from the 48th Assault Helicopter Co. was shot and crashed while in support of FB KATE. B Troop covered the downed aircraft and inserted the LRP platoon and one platoon of D Troop to secure the aircraft. Extraction was not made until 1645 when the bodies of the four crewmen were retrieved from the wreckage.

During the afternoon, air assets of B Troop supported FB MATHA who was under attack. After the extraction of the B and D elements, the LOH's and attack helicopters again returned to FB MATHA and remained in support until the fire base was evacuated at 1700H. Between 1700 and 1730 hours, two different sightings of enemy soldiers were made. Gunships engaged resulting in 3 KBA.

(32) 31 October 1969: At 1130 hours FB KATE came under heavy enemy fire. Before B Troop could arrive on station the attack had ceased. A VR was conducted with numerous fighting positions observed. At 1740 hours B Troop engaged two .51 caliber machineguns with crews resulting in 6 NVA KBA and destruction of the 2 .51 caliber machineguns.

(33) 1 November 1969: FB KATE was again attacked and the order was given to evacuate. B Troop supported contacts near FB KATE and Camp BU PHANG. Gunships and LOHs were credited with 9 enemy KBA late in the afternoon. The elements at FB KATE effected a linkup with forces from CAMP BU PHANG and returned to CAMP BU PHANG.

(34) 2 November 1969: B Troop conducted a VR in the vicinity of the abandoned FB MATHA. Trails with direction of movement to the north and northeast were reported. Scouts followed the trails to the northeast. At approximately 1500 hours the lead LOH drew ground fire sustaining several hits. The pilots flew the damaged LOH to a large field at YU793658. The trail LOH landed, picked up the crew of the downed aircraft and commenced to take-off. The LOH was struck several times by enemy machinegun

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fire causing the aircraft to crash and burn on impact. An AH-10 from B Troop attempted to assist the downed crew members and was also shot down and crashed. All crew members miraculously escaped the crashes and were seen alive on the ground by other aircraft in the area. At approximately 1520 hours the ARP and one platoon of D Troop were inserted in an attempt to secure the downed crews. Numerous enemy positions were observed by the ground elements. Attack helicopters kept continuous fire on the enemy but the ground elements were unable to reach the downed crew members. At 1800 hours one of the downed crew members was seen near an opening. During the attempted pickup the rescue helicopter sustained eight hits, wounding the co-pilot in the leg. The rescue helicopter returned to the area later and picked up one of the downed aviators. At 2000 hours, rescue efforts were aborted and the ground elements were extracted. Attempts to link up with the downed aviators were unsuccessful due to large enemy forces in the area.

(35) 3 November 1969: Coordination was affected with the 23rd ARVN Division for a reaction force in an attempt to reach the crash site. At 1330 hours sufficient assets were made available and two companies of the 22nd Ranger Battalion were inserted at YU97667 and started moving toward the crash site. At 1809 hours, the enemy initiated an attack with small arms, automatic weapons, B-40 rockets and mortars. AH-10s from B Troop supported the contact along with airstrikes and artillery. B Troop gunships remained over the unit until weather forced them out in the morning hours. An interesting development occurred just prior to insertion of the Ranger companies. The B Troop commander monitored a radio transmission on the B Troop FM command net of an English speaking voice saying, "What are you looking for, your pilots are safe in CAMBODIA." A classical type musical program followed, then another transmission in an unknown foreign language was heard.

(36) 4 November 1969: The 22nd Ranger companies were under mortar attack. B Troop engaged the area silencing the mortars. Throughout the day the ground elements were attacked and refused to be extracted. The 23rd ARVN Division Commander ordered the 1-53rd Infantry to effect a link-up and reinforce the besieged Ranger companies but were attacked enroute. B Troop continued in support of the ARVN elements and were credited with 15 KIA.

(37) 7 November 1969: B Troop conducted DEA of four B-52 strikes vicinity YU9476 with no significant findings. D Troop (-) was extracted from BU FRANG and brought to BAN ME THOUT-EAST to join the third platoon which was conducting ASP security at BAN ME THOUT-EAST.

(38) 8 November 1969: B Troop supported a unit in contact near CAMP BU FRANG. The enemy was engaged resulting in 3 KIA and 3 KBA. One aircraft took ground fire and received three hits.

(39) 11 November 1969: TF FIGHTER was dissolved and 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division assumed OPCON of B Troop. Although OPCON to

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1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, B Troop received their missions from the 23rd ARVN Division and was in general support of them. Missions conducted for the 1st Brigade were few and involved troops in contact. Operations SPREADS WHITE commenced on the 11th. One aircraft received a .50 caliber round wounding one crewmember enroute to BU PRANG on this date.

c. OPERATION SPREADS WHITE Significant Activities.

(1) 11-15 November 1969: Conducted normal VR vicinity of CAMP DUC LAP. B Troop was released to Squadron control on 13 November and returned to Camp Enari.

(2) 16 November 1969: B Troop provided support for CAMP BU PRANG that was under a stand-off attack. A reconnaissance east of DUC LAP indicated a large enemy force was moving southwest. A rest area was found at ZU0082 large enough to accommodate 250-300 individuals.

(3) 19 November 1969: Working east of BU PRANG, B Troop aircraft engaged a large enemy force resulting in 12 enemy KIA.

(4) 22 November 1969: Aircraft engaged an enemy force close to BU PRANG. Eight enemy were killed and several bunkers and structures were located.

(5) 23 November 1969: Operating west of DUC LAP the LOHs engaged an enemy element after receiving ground to air fire, resulting in 8 enemy KIA. Several bunkers, structures and trails were noted while conducting surveillance south of BAN ME THOUT-EAST.

(6) 24 November 1969: Elements were diverted from an area west of DUC LAP to provide assistance to a convoy under attack northwest of BAN ME THOUT. Gunships engaged the area with unknown results.

(7) 26 November 1969: LOHs killed one soldier east of DUC LAP.

(8) 27-30 November 1969: Weather and high winds limited operations.

(9) 1-4 December 1969: B Troop conducted normal reconnaissance in the vicinity of DUC LAP and BU PRANG with no significant findings.

(10) 5 December 1969: Two trucks from B Troop received small arms fire from the west end of the runway at BAN ME THOUT-EAST. The aero-rifle platoon swept the area with no findings. One individual from Headquarters Troop received a slight wound.

(11) 9 December 1969: Activity was subsiding in the BU PRANG and DUC LAP areas. B Troop received the mission to conduct VR north of DUC LAP to determine if the 66th Regiment had crossed the border. For

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the next three days, B Troop conducted this mission with no sightings indicating recent activity.

(12) 12 December 1969: South of DU PHUNG and LOH received ground to air fire. Fire was returned resulting in one KDA.

(13) 13 December 1969: THE ARP was inserted in an area several kilometers north of DUC LAP to confirm aerial sightings of enemy activity.

(14) 14-18 December 1969: Weather restricted activities.

(15) 19 December 1969: Working to the east of DUC LAP, four sampans were destroyed and 3 enemy KDA also resulted.

(16) 20 December 1969: Operations northwest of BAN ME THOUT produced signs of recent activity. One enemy was engaged at YU846473 resulting in 1 KDA.

(17) 22 December 1969: One enemy soldier exchanged fire with a LOH. The LOH took him under fire resulting in 1 enemy KDA.

(18) 23 December 1969: B Troop ARP was inserted into the area of the downed aircraft of 2 November. All indications showed the enemy had not attempted to strip the aircraft. All equipment, to include radios and ammunition, was still present. One American body and the AH-1G attack helicopter were recovered. The two LOHs were totally destroyed during the crash of 2 November.

(19) 23-29 December 1969: Reconnaissance continued with no significant findings.

(20) 30 December 1969: B Troop provided convoy escort for the 1st Brigade move from BAN ME THOUT-EAST to CAMP ENARI. B Troop moved overland and by air to CAMP ENARI and reverted to Squadron control on 30 December with operation SPRING WHITE terminating.

12. RESULTS:

a. Enemy Losses:

KIA	KBA	WPNS CIA	WPNS DEST	STRUC DEST	STRUC DAM	MATERIEL DEST
55	61	1AK-47	2x.50 caliber MG	61	31	6 bicycles 29 rice trays 3 rafts 3 sampans

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b. Friendly Losses:

(1) KIA: 1 Loss was a result of action on 2 November. One body was recovered on 23 December and later identified as one of the crew members that were shot down on that day.

(2) CIA: 2 individuals were captured following the action on 2 November and were returned to U.S. control on 10 December.

(3) MIA: 2 As a result of action on 2 November.

(4) EQUIPMENT: 3 aircraft destroyed
1 - AH-1G
2 - LOH

13. (C) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Supply: Class IIIA and Class V were stored at DU PRANG SPECIAL FORCES CAMP. Because of the weather resupply could not always meet the demand and operations were hampered on occasions as a result of this condition.

b. Communications: B Troop performed reconnaissance in areas that were out of range of FM communication. All liaison personnel to include the one located at CAMP DU PRANG were furnished with portable HF radios, however, the aircraft in the AO did not have the ARC-102 (HF) radios. B Troop made a special effort to keep TASK FORCE FIGHTER and 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division informed of their activities. The lack of communications resulted in late reports of significant information.

14. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES: No special equipment was used, however, B Troop used a technique that proved effective, while conducting last light visual reconnaissance around BAN ME THOUT. Through coordination, a small element of National Police was picked up each afternoon and inserted to question any suspicious individuals observed by the scouts.

15. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. Free World Forces have limited knowledge of the proper employment of an Air Cavalry Unit.

(1) Analysis: On numerous occasions, B Troop was diverted from a visual reconnaissance mission to support units in contact, although capable of performing this mission there is other combat power that should be utilized first i.e., attack helicopter units, artillery, tactical air, etc. To divert the air cavalry troop from their primary mission of reconnaissance and surveillance for extended periods of time reduces the intelligence gathering effort.

(2) Recommendations: That commanders of Free World Forces and

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their Vietnam advisors be made aware of the proper employment of air cavalry to include capabilities and limitations.

b. Coordination between Free World Forces was fair.

(1) Analysis: B Troop was called into areas that were "allegedly" cleared for their operation, only to discover air strikes in progress or friendly units in the area. On one occasion, the unit was cleared into an area that had recently been seeded with bomblets. Only through discussion with an Air Force Forward Air Controller was this discovered. Coordination between ARVN, MIKE FORCES was SPECIAL FORCES was difficult at times.

(2) Recommendations: That tactical headquarters be established to control all operations in a particular area in order that subordinate units can effect the necessary coordination and fire control essential to a tactical operation.

c. Reactions to the sightings made by the air cavalry troop were minimal.

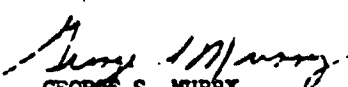
(1) Observation: Although B Troop was used in an economy of force role, no action was taken on their sightings. The ARVN forces were not prepared to react as evidenced by the action on 2 November. It took approximately 25 hours to organize a reaction force. Once committed the Ranger units fought well against overwhelming odds.

(2) Recommendations: That commanders of Free World Forces be prepared to react with appropriate combat power to sightings made by an air cavalry unit.

d. The use of D Troop (ground cavalry troop) for extended periods as ASP guard and ready reaction force was poor utilization of a reconnaissance element.

(1) Analysis: For over two months the troop remained static in a security and reaction force role. The effective intelligence gathering capability and economy of force role of the unit was lost during this period.

(2) Recommendations: That the ground cavalry not be employed in a static security role. If it does become necessary to task the troop with such a mission, that it be done only for a limited period of time.


GEORGE S. MURRY
LTC, AR
Commanding

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 7TH SQUADRON, 17TH CAVALRY
APO San Francisco 96262

AVBACB-GC

10 February 1970

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

THRU: Commanding Officer
17th Combat Aviation Group
APO 96240

Commanding General
1st Aviation Brigade
APO 96384

Commanding General
USARV
APO 96375

TO: Commanding General
MACV
ATTN: MACJ343
APO 96222

1. (U) NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation ANTLER - Experimental Ranger/Air Cavalry Operation.

2. (U) DATES OF OPERATION: 16 December 1969 - 23 January 1970

3. (C) LOCATION: II Corps Tactical Zone; Pleiku and Binh Dinh Provinces; Map, Vietnam 1:50,000 series - L7014; Sheets 6637 II and III, 6636 I and IV, 6737 II and III, 6736 I and IV.

4. (C) COMMAND AND CONTROL HEADQUARTERS:

a. The overall control of the operation was under the 4th Infantry Division.

b. The 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry was responsible for mission accomplishment.

5. REPORTING OFFICERS:

LTC GEORGE S. MURRY	CO, 7/17 Cav	16 Dec 69 - 23 Jan 70
MAJ RONALD G. MAXSON	CO, A Trp 7/17 Cav	16 Dec 69 - 23 Jan 70
CPT KIM H. OLMSTEAD	CO, K-75 Ranger Co	16 Dec 69 - 23 Jan 70
CPT KENNETH G. LINLINGER	CO, D Trp 7/17 Cav	16 Dec 69 - 23 Jan 70

INCLOSURE 5

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6. TASK ORGANIZATION: 7/17th Air Cavalry Squadron (-) consisting of A, B and D Troops and K-75 Ranger Company.

7. (U) SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. 4th Infantry Division provided two UH-1H and two attack helicopters on a daily basis to conduct insertions and extractions of the Ranger teams.

b. No artillery was placed DS to this operation but artillery was used on a routine basis against enemy sightings. Results were unknown.

8. (C) INTELLIGENCE: The area targeted was a reconnaissance zone for the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. No Free World Forces had conducted operations in the area for approximately three months. Although trails, overlays and hard-target lists were available from previous operations, no firm intelligence or identity of enemy units was available for the area. Intelligence data did indicate that the 408th SAPPER BATTALION conducted a training school some distance to the north of the operational boundary. It was also felt that small groups were sent south to obtain food and supplies from the low lands.

a. Cover and Concealment: The terrain throughout the area varied from double canopy jungle to sparsely wooded areas. One abandoned tea plantation was centered in the area of operation. Cover and concealment favored the enemy during aerial reconnaissance affording them good observation points throughout the area.

b. Obstacles: The area contained no obstacles to foot movement. Movement in the jungle terrain was slow but possible. Due to the nature of this operation, high speed, well used trails were used and the Ranger teams selected their observation points along these trails. There were two large rivers in the area that precluded wheel vehicle movement. This hampered D Troop (ground cavalry troop) in their operations. This was overcome by utilizing them in an airmobile role.

c. Observation: In the jungle areas, observation favored neither the friendly nor the enemy elements. In the relatively open areas, observation favored the Ranger elements. The enemy could be sighted from the Rangers concealed positions and combat power brought to bear on them.

d. Weather: Weather was good except for occasional high winds. Humidity was average, temperature ranged from 55° at night to 75° during the days. Ceilings and visibility were unlimited with the exception of two or three days.

9. MISSION: The primary mission was to gather intelligence within the area with a secondary purpose to determine the feasibility of placing LONG RANGE RECONNAISSANCE PATROLS (LRRP) GPCOM to an air cavalry unit, to develop techniques, and to identify problem areas.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: This concept was to employ LRRP teams in an AO to develop intelligence. As this is the basic function of air cavalry, the LRRP teams added depth to this effort and provided another collection agency. In addition, the rapid

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response to enemy sightings that was provided by the air cavalry units greatly assisted the LRRP teams in performing their mission. By coordinating the effort, LRRP teams were to be employed in areas adjacent to where A Troop was conducting air reconnaissance and D Troop was conducting ground reconnaissance. This technique permitted the LRRP teams to observe or ambush, as appropriate, any one attempting to evade from the area.

11. (C) EXECUTION: 4th Div FMG O 127-69 (U)

a. Issuance of Orders: Effective 16 December 1969, the K75 Ranger Co (-) was placed under operational control of the 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry. Prior coordination had been completed and the first eight teams were deployed in the AO on the 16th of December.

b. Significant Activities:

(1) 16 December: Eight teams were inserted in the AO.

(2) 18 December: At 0815 hours, one team was engaged with small arms. The team returned fire with M-16 and fragmentation grenades. A Troop, working in an adjacent AO was diverted and was on station at 0852. Scouts from A Troop attempted to locate the enemy force. At 0955, the aero-rifle platoon was inserted along with one platoon of D Troop to conduct a ground search of the area. A thorough sweep of the area failed to locate the enemy. At the end of the day eleven teams were either in ambush or observation positions.

(3) 19 December: A LRRP team spotted 20 enemy soldiers at 0850 hours. A Troop responded and was overhead within eight minutes. The enemy could not be fixed, however six enemy soldiers were sighted 3 kilometers away. The aero rifle platoon and two platoons of D Troop were inserted to search the area but the enemy soldiers could not be found. Two women were detained. Seven more LRRP teams were inserted and three extracted, leaving fifteen teams in the AO.

(4) 20 December: The same LRRP team that had a sighting on 19 December had two more sightings of 15 and 19 enemy soldiers walking by their position. A Troop responded and was unable to fix the enemy. The team was then extracted and soon after the scouts observed and engaged two enemy resulting in two KIL. The aero rifle platoon was inserted in an attempt to make contact on the ground with no results. Thirteen teams remained operational in the field.

(5) 21 December: A LRRP team watching a trail observed four individuals and sprung an ambush. Four rucksacks containing miscellaneous documents were captured. An extraction was made so that immediate readout of the documents could be accomplished. Eight teams were extracted and six were inserted for a total of 13 teams in the AO. One of the teams inserted had the mission of establishing an ambush in the vicinity of the sightings on 20 December.

(6) 22 December: A LRRP team moving into position to observe a trail at BRO21132 spotted three individuals. Establishing a hasty ambush, they wounded two VC and captured one along with an AK-47 and two rucksacks. A Troop LRP's were

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inserted and swept the area, with negative results. At 1820, the ARPs were diverted to assist the ambush team inserted on 21 December. The LRRP ambush initiated contact killing three VC/NVA, captured one M16-49, one AK-47, and two rucksacks. At 1828, A Troop attack helicopters were on station and provided cover for the withdrawal of the LRRP ambush to an LZ. The teams were extracted at 1915 hours by use of rope ladders.

(7) 23 December: A Troop worked the LRRP contact areas of 22 December. The scouts killed 2 NVA. The kills were confirmed by the aero rifle platoon which had been inserted in the area.

(8) 24 December: All teams were withdrawn from the AO for the cease fire period.

(9) 26 December: The teams were phased back into the AO with six teams being inserted.

(10) 27 December: At 1826, a LRRP Team initiated contact with an unknown size enemy force. A Troop reacted and were on station at 1847. At 1912 the LRRP team had swept the area, confirmed one enemy KIA and captured 1 AK-47 and rucksack.

(11) 28-31 December: The teams were phased out of the AO in preparation for operation WAYNE THRUST vicinity of An Kho.

(12) 2-23 January: 7/17 Cav (-) and K-75 Ranger Co (-) were placed DS to 1st Brigade, 4th Inf Div supporting OPERATION WAYNE THRUST. The coordinated operation experienced during the period 16-31 December was lacking during this operation. The aircraft to conduct the insertions and extractions came from assets allocated to the brigade. Due to higher priority missions the aircraft were not always available when required. This resulted in the teams not being inserted prior to the maneuver elements resulting in the loss of valuable intelligence information. Due to the employment of the ground troops the proposed location of the teams were changed several times necessitating needless reconnaissance missions and further delaying their employment. The squadron was assigned higher priority missions making support to the teams less responsive. This resulted in the enemy normally evading before the squadron could react. On 23 January the teams were released from OPCON to the squadron and placed in direct support of the two brigades.

12. (C) RESULTS:

a. Test Phase: 16 December - 31 December 1969

(1) Enemy:

(a) KIA: 8

(b) MIA: 2

(c) Detainees: 2

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(1) CIA: 1

(c) Weapons and Equipment: 16" documents, RS: 9, AK-47: 3, M16-49: 1.

(2) Friendly: None

b. OPERATION WAYNE THRUST: 2 January - 23 January 1970

(1) Enemy: None

(2) Friendly: 4 WIA from punji stake wounds.

c. GENERAL COMMENTS: During the test phase, interdiction of Highway 19 virtually ceased. From all indications enemy morale was lowered considerably. Constant surveillance was present in the area twenty-four hours a day. What was thought to be an area free of enemy forces was found to be quite active. Almost every major trail in the area was being observed. The enemy was forced to cease movement or risk detection. Much intelligence was gained from the operation. The most significant result of this operation was the determination that LRRP/Cavalry operations are highly successful when given the latitude and provided the assets to perform the mission.

13. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES:

a. The entire operation can be classified as a special technique. The ranger effort augmented the normal air cavalry functions of reconnaissance and surveillance. The cavalry complemented the ranger activity by rapidly reacting to sightings, reinforcing and exploitation when necessary.

b. By employing all assets, i.e. the ground cavalry troop in the portion of the AO that was trafficable, the air cavalry in rugged terrain and the LRRP teams targeted on trails, a thorough coverage of the area was obtained. The average daylight reaction of the air cavalry troop was five minutes. At night, the troop could react within 25 minutes.

c. The ARP was used on one occasion to reinforce a LRRP team. The ARP was later extracted and the LRRP team established an ambush. Approximately an hour after the ARP was extracted, the LRRP team sprang the ambush killing one enemy and capturing an AK-47 and rucksack.

14. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. Operations of this nature should be used in areas where limited intelligence exists.

(1) Analysis: Prior to this operation, only a hard target list and trail overlays were available of the AO. No known enemy units were identified in the area and the area was thought to be void of enemy activity. By saturation of the area with LRRP teams, much intelligence was gained, the interdiction of Highway 19 virtually ceased, and enemy supply lines to the lowlands were disrupted.

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(2) Recommendations: That commanders evaluate the feasibility of using LRRP/Air Cavalry operations in area where intelligence data is lacking.

b. Use of LRRP/Air Cavalry as an economy of force measure.

(1) Analysis: LRRP/Air Cavalry operations can be utilized to screen large areas of operation freeing maneuver units to be deployed against known enemy concentrations. The area of operation for the test phase measured thirteen kilometers by forty-five kilometers with terrain varying from thick, mountainous jungle to low lands with sparse undergrowth. The area was effectively screened and enemy movement detached.

(2) Recommendations: That commanders consider this method of employment to screen large areas, freeing maneuver elements to concentrate on known enemy forces.

c. Use of LRRP/Air Cavalry to proceed a major operation:

(1) Analysis: Although not tested by this unit, LRRP/Air Cavalry operations in a designated area prior to major offensive operations is a valid employment. By employing LRRP teams to target an area, excellent intelligence data can be obtained. Commanders must realize that it may take three to five days to develop an area adequately. Using air cavalry to conduct reconnaissance in the area before commencement of the operation would make maximum utilization of air and ground assets as targets could be fully developed.

(2) Recommendations: That commanders having LRRP/Air Cavalry assets use these valuable intelligence gathering elements in conjunction with each other to achieve maximum utilization of both units.

George S. Murry
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LTC, AR
Commanding

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AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE

1. (C) Aircraft Strength as of 31 Jan 1970:

UNIT	OH-6A Auth/ASG	AH-1G Auth/ASG	UH-1H Auth/ASG	TOTAL Auth/ASG
HQ TROOP	-----	-----	7 / 5	0 / 5
A TROOP	10 / 8	9 / 9	8 / 8	27 / 25
B TROOP	10 / 9	9 / 9	8 / 8	27 / 26
C TROOP	10 / 6	9 / 9	8 / 8	27 / 23
TOTAL	30 / 23	27 / 27	31 / 29	88 / 79

2. (C) Average Aircraft Availability by Troop by Type Aircraft 1 Nov 69 - 31 Jan 70:

UNIT	OH-6A	AH-1G	UH-1H
HBT			85% OR 1% NCORS 14% NORM
A TROOP	72% OR 5% NCORS 23% NORM	78% OR 4% NCORS 18% NORM	70% OR 4% NCORS 26% NORM
B TROOP	90% OR 2% NCORS 8% NORM	74% OR 5% NCORS 21% NORM	77% OR 5% NCORS 18% NORM
C TROOP	82% OR 2% NCORS 16% NORM	75% OR 2% NCORS 23% NORM	77% OR 3% NCORS 20% NORM

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